

coronavirus pandemic . . . featuring extensive propaganda and censorship efforts aimed at mollifying public anger and suppressing criticism against missteps in the government's initial response.

"In Monday's trial, Ms. Zhang said she regarded the proceeding, against her as illegitimate . . ."

I especially regret the Communist Party repression of the Chinese people because my father, First Lieutenant Hugh Wilson, served in China during World War II in the Flying Tigers where I grew up with his affection for the Chinese people and their extraordinary culture.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

ADOPTING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE 117TH CONGRESS

SPEECH OF

HON. JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, January 4, 2021

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, I express my opposition to the proposed House Rules governing the 117th Congress.

As the Congresswoman for Puerto Rico, I represent 3.2 million Puerto Ricans, American citizens by birth since 1917. Yet as such I have no vote on passage of measures.

While House Resolution 8 will continue to provide the Delegates and the Resident Commissioner a vote in the Committee of the Whole, the vote will only count if the votes cast are not deciding votes.

If Delegates or the Resident Commissioner, while in the Committee of the Whole, cast deciding votes, the measure will receive a re-vote without any delegate or Resident Commissioner casting a vote during the second vote.

This is just a reflection of a continued injustice and a step that does little or nothing to address it.

More than a symbolic expression, my constituents need equal standing.

This past November, Puerto Ricans exercised their choice by casting 623,053 votes for statehood, capturing 52-percent of the total vote. This referendum was a straight yes-no question as to the ultimate will of the Puerto Rican voters.

Puerto Rico demands equality. My constituents voted for equal voting representation in the U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate, which can only be achieved through statehood.

Puerto Rico would have at least four U.S. Representatives in the House and the Constitutionally mandated two Senators when it becomes a state. This would give the island six electoral votes during a Presidential election cycle.

And still, there are those who still try to subvert the will of the voters who actually live in the island.

All the crises that Puerto Rico has suffered during the past four years, including hurricanes, earthquakes, the coronavirus pandemic, and the fiscal crisis, demonstrate the urgency of achieving equality with the states.

That is why statehood cannot wait any longer. The island must receive the same

treatment that is received in the rest of the nation. There is strength in the Union, particularly in moments of collective crisis.

The territorial status is also primarily responsible for the island's economic underdevelopment and decline.

According to the Census there are 5.4 million Puerto Ricans living in the rest of the United States as opposed to 3.26 million living on the island—a difference of 2.1 million people, driven by the lack of opportunity.

It's a pleasure to serve in this House, the most diverse in its history. However, we are failing to address the pressing issue of Puerto Rico's need for real, not symbolic votes in Congress.

The island deserves equality, and my constituents deserve representation.

CONGRATULATING LARIMER COUNTY COMMISSIONER STEVE JOHNSON ON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. JOE NEGUSE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, today I wish to recognize the incredible work and achievements of Larimer County Commissioner Steve Johnson. For 24 years, Steve has devoted himself to serving his community and the State of Colorado, including spending 12 years serving in the Colorado Legislature and 12 years serving as a Larimer County Commissioner.

Prior to becoming a Larimer County Commissioner, Mr. Johnson served in the Colorado House of Representatives for 6 years, during which time he served as the Majority Caucus Chairman. He followed that service with an equally long 6-year stint in the Colorado Senate, serving on the Joint Budget Committee and Senate Appropriations Committee.

While serving as Larimer County Commissioner, he helped the county's recovery efforts as Larimer County faced some of the largest natural disasters in the county's history. The High Park Fire in 2012, the One Hundred Year Flood in 2013, and the Cameron Peak Fire and COVID-19 in 2020 have caused extensive damage and posed great challenges to the county's leadership. Commissioner Johnson helped steer the community through these disasters with level-headed determination and a commitment to the people of Larimer County.

He was also instrumental in helping to pass the Behavioral Health Initiative, a measure which led to Larimer County being a leader in Colorado for providing mental health services and substance abuse care and increased available resources for his community.

After 24 years of public service, Commissioner Johnson certainly deserves a happy and restful retirement. On behalf of the people of Colorado's 2nd Congressional district, thank you Commissioner Johnson for your outstanding dedication to public service.

RECOGNIZING SHARON STARK FOR HER SERVICE AS DISTRICT DIRECTOR FOR THE 11TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my dear friend and District Director, Sharon Stark, on her retirement after more than a decade of dedicated and faithful service to our community.

Mrs. Stark's strong work ethic started at a young age when she got her first job selling shoes at the age of 15. After college, she began her career as a bank teller and worked her way up to be a Vice President of Operations by the time she was 29. She then started a second career as Vice President of a Top 25 title company for residential and commercial real estate.

In 2005, Sharon was selected to be a member of Virginia's 11th Congressional District Democratic Committee where she served as the Treasurer for many years with our dear friend Chairman George Burke. Two years later, in 2007, she was named finance chair for George Barker's campaign for the Senate of Virginia. The success of the Barker campaign flipped control of the Senate and helped Democrats secure the majority.

Sharon has managed my Congressional district offices since 2009. Under her leadership, the office has established a stellar reputation for constituent services and community engagement.

It was during the depths of the 2008 financial crisis and the subsequent collapse of the housing market that Sharon demonstrated just how hard she was willing to fight for constituents. She put her considerable talent and expertise to work for our constituents. People came to our office at risk of being foreclosed upon, having their utilities turned off, not knowing where they would be sleeping the next night, and Sharon took up their cause. She fought with the banks, gave people hope where they saw none, and even went to the courthouse steps to prevent foreclosures. She saved people's homes and changed their lives for the better.

Since 2011, our offices have kept track of the financial assistance we have been able to secure for our constituents. This assistance includes helping constituents receive their refund from the IRS or benefits from the Veterans Administration, helping someone resolve their Social Security Disability Insurance claim, and other efforts that result in constituents receiving financial assistance owed to them. Over the past 9 years, Sharon and her team have helped our constituents obtain nearly \$20 million in one-time or retroactive benefits plus \$9 million per year in recurring benefits.

Sharon has organized countless events for the benefit of our constituents. She has established an Open Season event that brings together various health plan providers and industry experts to educate thousands of federal employees, retirees, survivor annuitants, and veterans on their health plan options for the coming year. Sharon spearheaded the annual Congressional Art Competition for VA-11 and has grown the event into something truly